



Gloucester County Nature Club

Monthly Newsletter

Nature Club meetings are open to the public
April 2003

**Program- Catalysts for Conservation- Thursday, April 10, 7:00 pm at EIRC, Sewell
Program Coordinator, Bob Cassel 478-2496**

The theme of the 2003 International Migratory Bird Day and the Gloucester County Bird Quest will be "Catalysts for Conservation." The theme highlights ten birds that have served as catalysts for the conservation movement in the US at different times and for a variety of reasons. These birds will be featured on the Bird Quest t-shirt and in our program this month. They include the Passenger Pigeon, Osprey, Brown Pelican, Thick-billed Parrot, Green-winged Teal, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Snowy Egret, American Golden Plover, Black-throated Green Warbler and Black-throated Blue Warbler.

This month's program will feature nine different club members who will each talk about one of the featured birds and how it served as a catalyst for conservation. Presenters include Marge Dolente, Ed Cleary, Kris Mollenhauer, Paula Dearlove, Brian Hayes, Marie Hageman, Karen Kravchuck, Carol and Bob Cassel. Come join us to learn how birds have been the impetus for land preservation and the creation of environmental laws throughout history.



**Field Trip-Wildflowers at Susquehanna State Park, MD-Sat., April 12, 9:00am
with Gale Cannon and Karl Anderson**

Field Trip Coordinator, Kris Mollenhauer 589-4387

We should see a good array of spring flowers on this trip to woodlands along the Susquehanna River in Maryland, including several such as Squirrel Corn and Papaw that would be very rare in New Jersey. Birds will not be ignored! Meet at Timberline Shopping Center in Sewell at 9am. For those who want to go directly to the trip site, cross the

Delaware Memorial Bridge, take I95 South to the first exit after crossing the Susquehanna River, go north on Rt 155, follow signs for Susquehanna State Park, turn right on Rock Run Road, and continue to the historic area (Rock Run Mill) and park by the mill. Travel time 60-70min. Bring a lunch and a beverage, field guides and binocs.



Silver Lake Trail Hike March 16th

Spring was in the air on Sunday as our group of hikers followed the yellow blazes on the Silver Lake Trail. This was a beautiful warm day and we were a large group of thirty or more being led by the boundless energy of the three Myers grandsons and one chocolate lab named Griz who came along with us when he got locked out of his car. The

trail took us through a wonderful forest of oaks and poplars and past stands of white cedar and shady spots where the snow hadn't melted yet. We saw evidence of turkey roosts and woodcock droppings. We saw first hand how the residents of Silver Lake are preserving this woodland at the headwaters of the lake. Spring is very late this year. No skunk cabbage poking up yet and no spring peepers were heard. The one sign of spring spotted was some pussy willows in bloom. Many thanks to the Streitzes, the Myers and their neighbors at Silver Lake who joined in leading this hike.



Visit the new website for the club at www.gcnatureclub.org to see photos from this field trip.

Conservation Notes

Genetically Modified Foods

Chances are, that included in your last meal or snack there were at least some ingredients that were grown from seeds with modified genetic codes. In a GM product scientists use DNA from an often unrelated organism to alter a specific characteristic in the desired organism. Canola has had cauliflower and petunia genes inserted into its DNA. Tomatoes have genes from flounder. Many people feel these foods are unsafe for humans to consume. The GMOs (genetically modified organisms) may have the potential to cause health problems, including allergies and hormonal disturbances. Industry tells us there is no evidence that they are unsafe. This is because they have done no tests on human consumption. The limited testing done on other animals has shown effects on immune systems and reduction in organ size. The following foods are most likely to contain transgenic material: soybeans, corn, canola oil, dairy products, and many other foods.

There are five multinational corporations that are producing genetically modified seeds and hormones. Many countries have made it illegal for GM seed to enter their countries due to concern over contamination. However, in this country GM seeds are widely used and foods that contain GMOS (genetically modified organisms) are considered to be not “significantly different” from conventional foods. Foods made from GM ingredients are not labeled in anyway and are found in many prepared and unprepared foods. Things such as soda, burgers, bread, beef, salad dressing, and tofu all contain GMOs.

In Zimbabwe, where over half of their population is facing starvation, the President recently refused 10,000 metric tons of corn for fear it could endanger the agricultural future of the country. The concern Zimbabwe and other countries have stems from the way the pollen from GMO crops can drift for miles to contaminate crops that farmers have planted from heirloom seed. Farmers in many parts of the world routinely save seed from one year's crop and use to grow the next year's crop. This ensures the crops they grow are well adapted to the region's growing conditions.



In some cases, farmers have suffered when their crops contain GMO due to wind pollination. Their heirloom crops, and future seeds become worthless because they contain GMOs. They are unable to sell their crop to any of the many countries that refuse to accept GMOs. These crops cannot be sold as organic. In some extreme case these

farmers have even been sued by the corporations that make the GM seed. The accusation is they violated patents and have stolen from these multinational corporations. Never mind that their seed source has been contaminated. In at least some cases farmers have had to pay huge settlements to these corporations and have been put out of business.

The companies that produce these seeds say they are helping to feed the world. The reality is they are eliminating natural genetic diversity that may ensure plants can adapt and change as needed. These companies are the same ones that have in the past created and marketed PCB's, dioxin, and Agent Orange.

Many concerned citizens in the US are now calling for clear labeling. The USDA can and should require extensive testing and labeling. As a consumer you can do what Europeans have done and speak out to your representatives in congress and to your local supermarkets. Many large food companies such as Bird's Eye, Nestle, Kraft, Nabisco, Mars, Pilsbury, Kellogg's and others have removed GMOs from the food they sell to Europe but not the food they sell in the US. Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) has introduced legislation to label all GM foods so we as consumers can make informed choices.

For more information on this topic you can go to www.safe-food.org (note hyphen) and www.gefoodalert.org. If you'd like to see some pro-GMO opinions you can go to www.safefood.org.

Arctic Oil Drilling Stopped Again

As the attack on Iraq began Congress was debating the budget. Another attempt was made to allow oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The oil industry lobbied hard but the environmental community lobbied too. Thankfully for the caribou and other inhabitants of this wild area the language has been removed from the budget for now. Please stay tuned to this topic because there will be other attempts to drill in this pristine wilderness.



For more information on this topic go to www.environmentaldefense.org.

It's Time to register for the 2003 Gloucester County Bird Quest

The 2003 Gloucester County Bird Quest will take place on Saturday May 3 from 7 AM to 12 NOON in Gloucester County. During this time, people will visit parks and natural sites in Gloucester County and find as many bird species as they can. The purpose of the Bird Quest is to draw attention to the remaining natural areas of Gloucester County, to learn how to identify birds by sight and sound, and to have fun with friends, colleagues and family. The Quest is an educational event; novices are



encouraged to participate. At 12 noon, all participants gather at Atkinson Memorial Park on Delsea Drive to report results and for a free lunch, t-shirts, and prizes. This year's Quest is being supported by many local environmental commissions, businesses, and industries. Participants are encouraged to form teams of friends and

family or join one of the buses (see below).

With cosponsor support, two buses (guided by "reasonably knowledgeable birders") will be provided for individuals to ride on, at no cost. The buses will stop at selected sites to look for birds. Last year's bus riders were treated to some wonderful looks at birds and we expect the same to happen again. **We expect the buses to fill this year so please register early to guarantee a seat.** Teachers who participate will be eligible for five hours of professional development credits. Last year's Quest attracted close to 300 participants, including teachers, school groups, scout troops, environmental commissions, families and residents of Gloucester and neighboring counties.

A county map and other materials are provided to each registered team. Participants can also attend any of a series of 12 free field trainings (listed below) in the two weeks before the Quest. An \$8 registration fee per participant helps cover the cost of lunch, t-shirt, prizes, etc. To obtain more information and a team registration form, to join a team or ride a bus, contact Anne Rossell at EIRC, 606 Delsea Drive, Sewell, NJ 08080. Information can also be requested by phone at 856-582-7000 x110, fax 856-582-4206 or email at anner@eirc.org. The forms are available at the Nature Club's new website: www.gcnatureclub.org

The club, through the help of many members, has set up an extensive training schedule for the weeks prior to Bird Quest. This is a terrific opportunity to get outside and learn more about the birds in our area. All trainings are free and open to all. If possible bring binoculars and a field guide. Even if you can't join us for Bird Quest we would love to have you join us for some of the trainings listed below.

BirdQuest 2003 Training Sessions

April 14 – Monday 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Birding Basics

Alcyon Lake Park, Pitman

This session is directed towards the beginning birder but all are welcome. We will discuss the tools of the trade from field guides, binoculars, field scopes, clothing, footwear, and repellants. In addition, we will discuss techniques and helpful hints on identifying that bird and enjoying your outdoor experience. *Directions: From 322 take Lambs road to W. Holly Ave. Take Track Ave past sports fields; meet at the pavilion.*

Leader: Paula Hayes

Co Leader: Mimi Glass



April 15 – Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Birding by Ear Part I

EIRC Building, 606 Delsea Drive

This classroom training session is the first of three trainings with a focus on identifying bird song and calls. *Directions: On Delsea Dr. (47) in Washington Twp. Located next to the Dairy Queen and the Italian Bistro.*

Leader: Brian Hayes

Co Leader: Ed Komczyk

April 22 – Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 PM

BirdQuest Training

Scotland Run Park, Clayton

Directions: From Delsea Dr (47) in Clayton take 610 Clayton-Williamston Rd. East towards Williamston. Meet at park headquarters on the right across from Wilson Lake.

Leader: Bob Duke

Co Leader: Doris and Dwight Weir

April 23 – Wednesday 6:00 – 7:00 AM BirdQuest Training

Glassboro Woods, Clayton

Directions: Meet at Carpenter Ave. off Rt. 47. Carpenter Ave. is about 1.7 miles south of Rt. 322 on Rt. 47. Carpenter Ave. is a dirt road.

Leader: Dr. Ebert

Co Leader: Kris Mollenhauer

April 24 – Thursday 6:00 – 7:00 PM BirdQuest Training

Chestnut Branch Park, Mantua

Directions: Access from 553A (Main St. Barnsboro). Meet at wildflower gardens behind hockey rink.

Leader: Jeff Holt

Co Leader: Doris and Dwight Weir

April 25- Friday 6:00- 7:00 AM BirdQuest Training

Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge

Directions: Take 45 South to Salem. Turn right onto Route 49 west after 2 miles turn left onto Lighthouse Rd. Continue to the end of Lighthouse Rd. and then turn right and then right again onto Fort Mott Rd. Continue approximately one mile on Fort Mott Rd. then turn right onto Xmas Tree Lane. Turn right into the dirt parking area behind the Blue Goose Sign.

Leader: Linda Ziemba

Co-leader: Paula Hayes

April 27 – Sunday 8:00 – 9:00 AM BirdQuest Training

Floodgate Road

Directions: Access from Rt. 44 South of Gibbstown. Turn right onto Floodgate road (at the racetrack) and meet all the way down at the gate by the river.

Leader: Dr. Ebert

Co Leader: Loretta Dunn and Jonathon Stillwell

April 27 – Sunday 6:00 – 7:00 PM BirdQuest Training

Washington Lake Park - Backend

Directions: Take Larson Lane off the North side of Chapel Hts. Rd(639), East of Gloucester Co. Community Church. Meet at the parking area (end of street).

Leader: Ron Kegel

Co Leader: Marge Dolente & Paula Dearlove

April 28 – Monday 6:00 – 7:00 AM BirdQuest Training

West Deptford Scenic Park, West Deptford

Directions: From 130/295 take exit 21 Delaware St (640) west. Meet in parking lot about 300 yards north of the intersection of Grove St. and Delaware St (640).

Leader: Jeff Holt

Co Leader: Deb Maka

April 29 – Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 PM Birding by Ear Part II

EIRC Building, 606 Delsea Drive

This classroom training session is the second of three trainings with a focus on identifying bird song and calls. *Directions: On Delsea Dr. (47) in Washington Twp. Located next to the Dairy Queen and the Italian Bistro.*

Leader: Erik Mollenhauer

Co Leader: Marie Hageman



April 30 – Wednesday 6:00 – 7:00 AM Birding by Ear Part III

Lake Narraticon, Swedesboro

The last of the Birding by ear series, this session applies the knowledge gained through classroom and independent study. A great time to ask questions about bird song.

Directions: Access from Park Ave. in Swedesboro.

Leader: Bob and Carol Cassel

Co Leader: Ed and Millie Cleary

May 1 – Thursday 6:00 – 7:00 PM BirdQuest Training

Wheelabrator, Westville

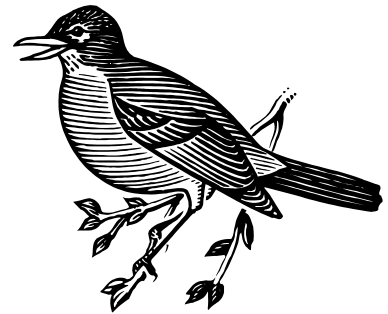
Directions: Access from 130, opposite Hazel Ave in Westville, just south of Big Timber Creek. Meet in parking lot on the right just before the guard station.

Leader: Bob Duke

Co Leader: Karen Kravchuck

The World Series of Birding Comes to Gloucester County

On May 10, 2003, the Gloucester County Nature Club will compete in the New Jersey Audubon Society's prestigious World Series of Birding. The object of the WSB is to identify, by sight or sound, as many species of birds as you can within 24 hours. Our team, The Gloucester County Ruffs, will compete in the Limited Geographic Area (LGA) part of the World Series of Birding, they will spend their entire 24 hours in Gloucester County. The team will consist of Jeff Holt, Dick Ebert, and Bob Duke. While the World Series of Birding is a competition, it also serves another, more important, purpose. Each competing team raises money through pledges based on the number of birds correctly identified by the team. (e.g. \$1.00/species) You may also do a flat pledge.



Individuals may help the team by providing them information on the location of unusual or nesting birds by calling Jeff Holt at 429-1802 (day) or 845-8925 (evening) or by making a pledge. If you'd like more information on making a pledge you may contact Marge Dolente at 384-6214 or visit www.gcnatureclub.org for a pledge form. Club members may also choose to collect pledges from friends and family on behalf of the team. You can do this by downloading the form from the website. Checks should be made out to the Gloucester County Nature Club and will be donated to Natural Resource Defense Council. Donations should be sent to Marge Dolente at 59B S. Evergreen, Woodbury, NJ 08096.

May Plant Sale



Just a reminder to all the gardeners in the club that our annual plant sale will be held just before the start of our regular May meeting at EIRC. Much of what is offered at the sale comes from our own gardens. As you make your way to your flower beds now that spring has finally arrived, keep an eye out for those perennials that need dividing, "volunteers" in not quite the right spots, seeds, trees and shrubs, too. Whatever you can share, bring it with you and be part of the plant sale.

The sale will start at 6:30 and the proceeds will benefit the nature club and its programs. Questions? Call Karen at 468-6536.

Election of Trustees

May is our Annual meeting to elect Trustees. In the May newsletter we will be including a ballot which you can use to vote for the Trustees of your choice. Trustees are responsible for electing and providing direction for the Executive Committee members. When elected, Trustees serve a three-year term at which time the seat is up for election. All voting is final at the close of the May meeting with the results to be included in the June newsletter. If you are interested in becoming a Trustee please contact Brian Hayes (856) 468 – 9272 before April 15 to get your name on the ballot.

Arbor Day Ceremony at Old Pine Farm

A tree planting ceremony in honor of Arbor Day will be held on Saturday, April 26, at Old Pine Farm Natural Lands Trust at the end of Rankin Avenue in Blackwood Terrace. The trust is receiving 60 trees from the New Jersey Tree Foundation and trustees of Old Pine Farm will start planting at 10 a.m. Any one who is interested in helping out is invited to attend, help plant a tree and walk through the 32 acre nature preserve. Please bring a shovel and work gloves. Trees purify the air and contribute to the ecology of the planet. For more information or directions please call George Willoughby at 227-5723 or e mail at geowilby@juno.com.



Receive the Newsletter by Email

We are going to begin testing a new way to receive the newsletter. If you have access to the internet we would be happy to send you a notice each time we put a new newsletter up on the web. The email message will in almost all cases give you the news faster than the traditional newsletter. This will save the club some mailing costs and conserve some natural resources as well. We will not be sharing these email addresses with anyone and they will only be used for Gloucester County Nature Club mailings. It will also allow you to receive information if there is a change in filed trip, program or other information. While we try this new method out you will still receive the newsletter the old fashioned way. Once we are assured addresses are correct we will only send it to you electronically. If you'd like to be on the list to receive it electronically please email me at pnbhayes@aol.com.



Looking Ahead-

Saturday, April 16th - Arbor Day Celebration at Old Pine Farm

Thursday, May 8th - Plant Sale & Program on Beekeeping

Saturday, May 3rd - Bird Quest

Saturday, June 1st - Water Fest

Thursday, June 12th - Picnic



Club Notes:

-Executive Committee Meeting: April 6th at 7:00 pm, Bob and Carol Cassel's House, 407

Heritage Road, Mantua. Call 478-2496 for directions.

-The Nature Club is always looking for ideas for future programs and field trips. Please contact the program or trip coordinators if you have ideas or would like to help.

-As spring approaches we will be looking for members willing to help out at community events. If you are interested in volunteering for a few hours please give one of our Community Events Coordinators a call- Jackie Partridge 848-4852, Bonnie Dann 845-4650, or Elaine Dzeima 227-0839

-For information about the Nature Club call Brian Hayes at 856-468-9272.

-Information for the next newsletter should be sent to Paula Hayes at pnbhayes@aol.com or 413 North Stockton Avenue; Wenonah, NJ 08090 by the 15th of each month.

Gloucester County Nature Club
c/o EIRC
606 Delsea Drive
Sewell NJ 08080